United Nations A/64/63

General Assembly

Distr.: General
26 February 2009

Original: English

Sixty-fourth session
Items 129 and 136 of the preliminary list*

Programme planning

Report on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

Strengthening the role of evaluation and the application of evaluation findings on programme design, delivery and policy directives

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

"While evaluation is playing a positive role in improving performance, overall evaluation capacity of the Secretariat continues to be inadequate"

Summary

The present report is the tenth in a series of studies that have been submitted biennially since 1988 to the General Assembly through the Committee for Programme and Coordination, under regulation 7.4 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation. It is intended to:

- Synthesize and summarize key findings, conclusions and recommendations of independent evaluations and self-evaluations conducted within the Secretariat during 2006-2007;
- Assess evaluation use;
- Provide an overview of current evaluation capacity and practice;
- Present the evaluation workplan for the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS); and

* A/64/50

09-25160 (E) 240309

- Discuss steps taken to implement three action items proposed in the prior OIOS biennial study.

This present study is based on a quantitative and qualitative analysis of evaluation reports from the past biennium summarizing key findings and conclusions, a survey of all Secretariat programmes, and an assessment of existing data on evaluation practice and capacity.

Evaluation reports from 2006 and 2007 reveal that evaluation focused largely on issues of programme implementation, many at the project level. Evaluation findings identified key issues and themes with regard to the Organization's performance, both in relation to organizational strategic priorities and to programme policy, design and delivery. Evaluation is playing a positive role in improving programme performance, being used for both learning and accountability. Evaluations have resulted in better informed and more relevant decision-making on programme design and planning and improved organizational effectiveness and efficiency.

Overall evaluation capacity at the central, programme and subprogramme levels of the Secretariat continues to be inadequate, despite an increase in budgets for the function over the last two bienniums. However, by three other measures — a dedicated evaluation function, evaluation policies, and evaluation coverage — capacity has been growing. The evaluation function of OIOS was strengthened in December 2007, through General Assembly resolution 62/236, when it was given nine new general temporary assistance posts.

Finally, in the assessment and selection of potential inspection and evaluation topics, the Inspection and Evaluation Division recently implemented a planning framework that considers, in turn, factors relating to risk, issues of strategic importance and the need for systematic and cyclical coverage. Evaluation topics for 2008 and 2009, based on existing mandates, risk assessment and one client request relating to a high-risk topic, are presented in the present report.

Contents

		Page
I.	Introduction	4
II.	Methodology	4
III.	Study findings	5
	A. Synthesis and summary of evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations	5
	B. Evaluation use	12
	C. Overview of Secretariat evaluation practice and capacity	14
	D. Evaluation workplan of the Office of Internal Oversight Services	15
	E. Follow-up to recommended actions from prior report	19
IV.	Conclusions	21
Annexes		
I.	Programmes determined to be within the purview of the Office of Internal Oversight Services	22
II.	Methodology utilized in conducting the present study	24

I. Introduction

1. The present report is the tenth in a series of studies that have been submitted biennially since 1988 to the General Assembly through the Committee for Programme and Coordination, in accordance with the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation.[1] It was reviewed by Secretariat departments and offices, and their comments were incorporated as appropriate. This report was completed in 2008, but not presented to the Committee for Programme Planning in that year, due to the Committee's new cycle for evaluation matters. The report was issued by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) as a report to management in June 2008, and OIOS has already started to follow up on the recommendations contained therein.

2. This tenth biennial study has five objectives, as follows:

(a) To synthesize and summarize key findings, conclusions and recommendations of evaluations conducted within the United Nations Secretariat during the biennium 2006-2007 (in support of regulation 7.4 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation);[2]

(b) To assess how evaluations have been used in the biennium;

(c) To provide an overview of current evaluation capacity and practice, including key findings and recommendations from the prior Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the assessment of evaluation capacities and needs in the United Nations Secretariat (IED-2006-006);

(d) To present the evaluation workplan for the Inspection and Evaluation Division of OIOS for 2008 and 2009, including a description of a newly introduced risk assessment protocol;

(e) To discuss steps taken to implement the three action items proposed in the prior OIOS biennial study (A/61/83, paras. 28-32).

II. Methodology

3. This study was conducted using the following seven methods: (a) a quantitative analysis of a non-random sample of 75 evaluation reports conducted in the Secretariat during the biennium 2006-2007 to determine their evaluation attributes — scope, objectives, and categories of findings, conclusions and recommendations; (b) a qualitative analysis of a non-random sample of 35 reports to assess key findings on the eight strategic priorities of the Organization;[3] (c) a

[1] ST/SGB/2000/8 of 19 April 2000. The report responds specifically to regulation 7.4, which requires that a brief report summarizing the conclusions of the Secretary-General on all evaluation studies be submitted to the General Assembly at the same time as the text of the proposed medium-term plan (now known as the "strategic framework").

[2] For this study, "United Nations Secretariat" refers to the 31 different programmes determined to be within the mandate of OIOS. See annex I for a complete list of the 31 programmes.

[3] These eight areas are identified in the biennial programme plan and priorities for the period 2006-2007 (A/59/6/Rev.1 and Corr.1).

qualitative analysis of a stratified random sample of 15 evaluation reports to assess key findings on programme policy, design and delivery (as per regulation 7.4 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation); (d) a review of four cross-cutting, programme-wide evaluations to assess evaluation findings and recommendations for these four programmes; (e) a self-administered, web-based survey of all biennial study focal points representing the 31 programmes in the study scope, to ascertain evaluation practice and use;[4] (f) an analysis of secondary data sources, including evaluation plans for the bienniums 2006-2007 and 2008-2009; and (g) a review of the Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the assessment of evaluation capacities and needs in the United Nations Secretariat (IED-2006-006), to collect key data on evaluation capacity and needs.

4. See annex II for a detailed discussion of the first four methods identified above.

5. A key limitation of the present study is that OIOS cannot verify that it has identified and obtained all evaluation reports for the biennium 2006-2007.[5] The Office independently identified Secretariat evaluation reports from various sources, including programme Internet websites, and provided clear guidance to programme focal points for submitting evaluation reports. In total, OIOS obtained 201 reports, of which 168 met the OIOS operational definition of "evaluation" established for this study.[6] However, OIOS could not confirm that all Secretariat evaluations conducted during the biennium period had, in fact, been considered by OIOS.

6. A further limitation is the relatively small sample sizes that were used for the qualitative data analyses, which limits the extent to which their findings can be generalized to the entire Secretariat.

III. Study findings

A. Synthesis and summary of evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations

Evaluation in 2006-2007 focused largely on issues of programme implementation, many at the project level

7. In determining the evaluation scope of the 75 sample reports, OIOS assessed whether this was at the cross-cutting, Organization-wide level, the programme level, the subprogramme level, the project level or the country level. Of the 75 reports reviewed, 43 per cent targeted the project level, while only 12 per cent targeted the

[4] The survey was conducted in February and March 2008. Of 31 programme focal points, 27 completed the survey, for an 87 per cent response rate. One programme responded after data collection had closed, and that survey was not used in the study. The remaining three programmes did not respond to the survey.

[5] See annex II for a complete discussion of how OIOS identified and obtained evaluation reports.

[6] The OIOS operational definition of evaluation is: "a systematic and discrete process, as objective as possible, to determine the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and/or sustainability of any element of a programme's performance relative to its mandate or goals. Evaluation can be used for accountability, learning and/or decision-making purposes". OIOS did not assess the quality of the reports obtained.

programme level. For the remaining reports, the scope was on the subprogramme, country or cross-cutting, Organization-wide level.

8. In determining the evaluation focus of the 75 sample reports, OIOS assessed whether this was on programme policy, design, delivery, outputs or outcome and impact. Of the 75 reports reviewed, the majority (68 per cent) focused on issues pertinent to how the programme was implemented, while 40 per cent focused on programme outputs and 30 per cent addressed design issues. Just one fourth addressed outcomes or impact.

9. Regardless of overall focus, the criteria of efficiency (73 per cent) and effectiveness (95 per cent) guided a majority of the Secretariat evaluations conducted in the past biennium.[7] Less commonly, 59 per cent of the evaluations considered relevance as a criterion against which to measure performance.[8] OIOS notes that, although it is understandable that self-evaluations would not always focus on relevance and impact, the question of whether it is satisfactory for self-evaluation to focus on processes at the expense of policy and results should be raised. Relevance and impact are the primary purposes of independent evaluation as conducted by OIOS, and could also be the focus of self-evaluation. In the majority of the reports reviewed, OIOS could not discern from their contents whether gender perspectives had been incorporated into the scope of the evaluations.[9]

10. Given the above, it is not surprising that evaluation findings and conclusions emanating from Secretariat evaluations in 2006-2007 mostly concern issues of programme design and delivery, as opposed to policy directives or programme impact. Nearly all of the 75 reports reviewed by OIOS presented evaluation findings and conclusions pertinent to those programmatic components.

Evaluations reveal common challenges and successes across the Secretariat within the framework of strategic priority areas and in programme policy, design and delivery

11. OIOS summarized Secretariat evaluation findings from 2006-2007 from two different perspectives: (a) within the framework of key strategic priority areas of the Organization and (b) within the framework of programme policy, design and delivery.[10] The main conclusions from both analyses are presented below. Both independent OIOS evaluations and programme self-evaluations are included in the analyses.

Priority areas

12. The first qualitative analysis of 35 evaluation reports reveals common themes and issues related to the Organization's eight priority areas.[11] OIOS notes that these

[7] In many reports, "effectiveness" referred to achievement of outputs.

[8] Relevance was more likely to be used as an evaluation criterion for project-level evaluations than for programme-level evaluations.

[9] This is required in the norms and standards for evaluation in the United Nations (standard 4.8), endorsed by the United Nations Evaluation Group in April 2005.

[10] As stated in paragraph 3 above, the first analysis was based on 35 reports, and the second analysis was based on 15 reports.

[11] This is a non-random sample of 35 reports obtained by OIOS.

35 reports cover only 15 programmes, and therefore the conclusions drawn from this analysis for the Secretariat as a whole are limited.[12]

13. **Maintenance of peace and security.** An OIOS evaluation of results-based budgeting in peacekeeping operations found that it should be applied in a flexible manner, considering the uniqueness of each mission. Another evaluation of the gender-mainstreaming work of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) concluded that the Mission had been successful in raising the profile of gender-based issues and domestic violence. However, gender-awareness training for new staff was judged by some as inadequate. An evaluation of the gender-mainstreaming efforts of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) showed that, although gender issues had not reached prominence in post-conflict reconstruction policies, they had gained country-level visibility. Many women and girls had been overlooked in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process.

14. The OIOS series of in-depth evaluations of the Department of Political Affairs found that the Department is fulfilling most of its core functions, and that its many different clients are largely satisfied. Performance is more mixed, however, with regard to its functions in support of the prevention, control and resolution of conflicts. The Department faces several significant challenges, including insufficient knowledge management, operational guidelines and work processes. Given that increased resources are only needed at targeted levels, more efficient use of existing resources through greater staff mobility, task reallocation and resource planning would enhance performance.

15. **Disarmament.** OIOS did not identify any evaluation reports covering disarmament.[13]

16. **Promotion of sustained economic growth and sustainable development.** An evaluation of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) found that its primary strengths include convening power and capacity to provide a comprehensive and inclusive regional forum for high-level discussions, and its analytical, normative and capacity-development work in transport, statistics, energy and disability. Primary challenges included its overly broad thematic approach, piecemeal approach to operational work at the country level, inadequate follow-up and insufficient coordination with United Nations country teams.

17. An evaluation of the development account project of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) found that it strengthened the capacity of

[12] The 15 programmes are: the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the International Trade Centre (ITC), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat).

[13] The Office for Disarmament Affairs has developed an evaluation policy but was not subject to any evaluation in 2006-2007.

ESCWA member States in applying internationally accepted methodology and standards to the data compilation and reporting on foreign direct investment data and statistics. An assessment of ESCWA publications identified weaknesses in planning, monitoring and assessment, and found that the Commission needs to promote more thorough planning, including the identification of targeted audiences, an interdisciplinary approach and comprehensive quality assurance.

18. An evaluation of shared information system of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) found that it was an effective instrument to share statistical information internally and with the ECLAC subregional and national offices, in particular during the preparation of ECLAC flagship publications. Another evaluation of a project implemented jointly with the Inter-American Development Bank on "Dissemination and Utilization of 2000 round Censuses" found satisfaction with progress made in the assessment and projection of demographic data based on 2000 census data in eight countries of the region, as a result of technical cooperation activities.

19. An evaluation of the coal mine methane project of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) assessed its success in achieving the objectives of member States; there was broad agreement within the Ad Hoc Group of Experts that greater participation by mining industry representatives was necessary to inform their work by providing insights and expertise and to champion and implement the Group's work.

20. The review by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) of its Global Environment Facility project for addressing land-based activities in the Western Indian Ocean found that the project had the potential to address the degradation of the marine and coastal environment, due to land-based activities, and had already contributed substantially in the midterm. However, it was unlikely to measurably improve water and sediment quality, except in the immediate vicinity of some demonstration sites. Another UNEP evaluation on its biodiversity indicators for national use project rated the project as satisfactory; a significant result was capacity-building through bringing together diverse stakeholders working on biodiversity conservation-related issues within each country.

21. The external evaluation of investment advisory services of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) concluded that they were relevant, efficient, effective, and had impact. An integrated approach to programme delivery based on interprogramme linkages and interprogramme synergies could further increase overall relevance, impact and quality of UNCTAD work in this area, resulting in a comprehensive, holistic and all-encompassing coverage of investment advisory services. Another external UNCTAD evaluation of the technical cooperation programme on accession to the World Trade Organization found that the programme provided timely, comprehensive, demand-driven and development-focused assistance.

22. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs evaluation of development account projects concluded that the account was largely achieving its aims and producing demonstrable and beneficial results. The evaluation identified management improvements, including a more systematic approach to analysing results. The General Assembly's triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities of the United Nations development system concluded that challenges remained in making the United Nations system more coherent and

efficient. Operational activities for development needed to respond to developing countries' needs in a flexible manner and in accordance with national development strategies and development priorities, in order to make progress towards Millennium Development Goal targets.

23. The International Trade Centre (ITC) evaluation of the Export-led Poverty Reduction Programme found that its contribution to economic growth was modest, although the exact contribution could not be precisely estimated. Its main contribution was to demonstrate to national decision makers that, if properly addressed, trade creation can contribute to the reduction of poverty rates. Where Export-led Poverty Reduction Programme projects worked closely with partners who invested their own resources, impact on employment and income generation was significantly greater than when the Programme was the only investor. The ITC review of the Asia Trust Fund found that, although in early stages, it had been increasingly recognized as a valuable tool to deliver short-term trade-related technical assistance rapidly and efficiently; however, results would inevitably be produced in an uneven fashion, with strong concentration on capacity of the business support infrastructure and export potential.

24. UN-Habitat's evaluation of the water and sanitation trust fund found that its work was appropriately directed at making a contribution to the Millennium Development Goals through a focus on vulnerable and neglected populations in small urban centres and poverty pockets in larger cities. Programmes in India and Nepal in particular made strides in several areas, including community-led sanitation, water demand management, introduction of innovative water and sanitation approaches and community capacity-building. The UN-Habitat evaluation of the strengthening of national training and capacity-building project concluded that it performed well in terms of numbers of trainers trained and countries impacted. The tools, training and capacity-building support materials were the project's major visible outputs. However, the lack of strong policy and institutional and financial frameworks in many countries impaired project sustainability.

25. **Development for Africa.** The evaluation by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) of the Africa Trade Policy Centre found that it had proven its relevance, efficiency and ability to respond in a timely manner in assisting African countries to build capacity in trade-related issues and multilateral negotiations, especially through research, training and product dissemination. The Centre needed to deepen its analytical studies and research, and intensify efforts to build institutional capacity of African member States and regional economic communities to undertake trade policy analysis. An ECA evaluation of the Institute for Economic Development Planning found that it played an important role but needed a thorough scientific needs assessment and management audit to bring in new vigour, focus, management skills and commitment to fulfil its vision and mission. Evaluations of the United Nations Development Group's contribution to the implementation of the Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness in Cameroon, Gabon and Mauritania found high recognition and commitment to Declaration principles in the three countries and progress in implementation. Concerns were noted about staff capacity, staff time allocation, processes, systems and operational efficiency.

26. **Promotion of human rights.** An evaluation by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in the Republic of the Congo on the promotion and protection of human rights found the project to be

successful in terms of addressing the need for justice and international law. Human rights awareness had increased considerably. The project helped build the capacity of national and local actors to intervene and set the stage for future human rights and peacebuilding work. In Nepal, an OHCHR evaluation found that, although impunity and absence of accountability remained major unresolved issues, the OHCHR mission directly contributed to reducing the general climate for impunity, decreasing violence and human rights violations and promoting a climate conducive to dialogue and peace talks.

27. The evaluation by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) of its human rights, conflict resolution and tolerance programme found that the concepts of human and children rights introduced in the programme's materials increased interest in human rights, tolerance and conflict resolution; teachers and students stressed that the programme influenced and diversified teaching techniques. Furthermore, it decreased the level of student conflict and violence in one area tremendously, while impact was weak in another. Programme obstacles included use of inappropriate discipline techniques, an overly crowded school, and unsuitable infrastructure.

28. **Effective coordination of humanitarian assistance efforts.** The evaluation by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) of internally displaced persons in Somalia found that agencies and non-governmental organizations were operating according to separate mandates, with limited coordination, minimal common needs assessment or mutually agreed priorities, varying target regions, and multiple beneficiaries. Another evaluation of UNHCR response to the emergency in Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic found that UNHCR national staff had played an indispensable role in the relief effort, working hard in difficult conditions, organizing assistance and providing administrative and logistical support. An evaluation of the UNHCR response to the Tsunami emergency in Indonesia and Sri Lanka found that the Office had demonstrated considerable capability to deliver, both in its protection mandate and in emergency and transitional shelter.

29. **Promotion of justice and international law.** No evaluations were available on promotion of justice and international law, although the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) evaluations contained some relevant information. Some UNODC evaluations reported that its projects had strengthened Government institutional capacity through strategy and policy development, the promulgation of new laws and mainstreaming of counter-narcotics portfolios within Governments. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations evaluations of gender-mainstreaming work in UNTAET and UNAMSIL also relate to the promotion of justice.

30. **Drug control, crime prevention and combating international terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.** The UNODC project evaluations determined that several had contributed to local capacity by improving and standardizing public security and drug law enforcement officer training, increasing police force law enforcement expertise, ensuring greater public security and enhancing drug interception capacity. Drug abuse prevention projects strengthened service provider and community capacity to address youth needs. Several evaluations reported that UNODC information technology support provided crucial information for performance measurement. Other evaluations, however, expressed doubts about

whether the quality of services could be sustained in the long term; additional human resources, funding, or both, were required to maintain current capacity and quality.

Programme policy, design and delivery

31. The second qualitative analysis of 15 evaluation reports reveals common themes and issues related to programme policy, design and delivery. OIOS notes that these 15 reports cover only 11 programmes, and therefore the conclusions drawn from this analysis for the Secretariat as a whole are limited.[14]

32. With regard to programme policy, the reports identify the following issues as impeding effective policy:

- Insufficient consideration given to gender issues;
- Insufficient consideration given to minorities (such as indigenous peoples);
- Insufficient consideration given to sustainability;
- Insufficient consideration given to structural and administrative issues;
- Inadequate level of cooperation with partners;
- The need to consider decentralization of authority and activities.

The evaluation of one programme identified insufficient focus on gender and indigenous peoples as a policy issue that was not adequately addressed. Another evaluation concluded that partner organizations needed to be further involved in individual projects and that administrative deficiencies needed to be corrected. Similarly, the evaluation of a humanitarian response effort identified the need to better involve local communities and to improve logistical capacity.

33. With regard to programme design, the reports identify the following issues as impeding effective design:

- Poor programme planning;
- Inadequate consideration of the strategic issues of the wider United Nations environment;
- Insufficient consultation with relevant stakeholders.

Specific examples of these concerns include the evaluation of one programme that found inadequate cooperation and coordination with other agencies and donors in the planning stages, and another evaluation that identified the need to better integrate gender issues and build faster resource mobilization mechanisms in order to strengthen programme design.

34. The reports also identify effective practices with regard to programme design. These include drafting meaningful, relevant and measurable objectives; evaluations of technical assistance and development projects largely found their objectives to be realistic, as well as appropriate to measure their results and their contributions to the achievement of larger programme goals. A further effective design practice was

[14] These 11 programmes are: UNODC, the Department of Public Information, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, ECA, ESCAP, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNCTAD, OHCHR, OIOS, UN-Habitat and UNHCR.

highlighted in the evaluation of a regional commission programme, which found that regional seminars with partners were useful tools to facilitate the formulation of guidelines and policies. Several evaluations point to the effectiveness of using lessons learned from prior experiences in subsequent design exercises.

35. With regard to programme delivery, the reports identify the following issues as necessary elements for effective programme delivery:

- Delivery of the right activities in order to achieve programme goals;
- Strong project and budget management;
- Adequate use of resources;
- Clarity in the distribution of programme responsibilities;
- Efficient internal communication and administrative procedures;
- Effective coordination and collaboration with other organizations of the United Nations system and stakeholders.

Two evaluation reports illustrate some of the issues identified above. One, an evaluation of a public information programme, found that, based on user feedback surveys, activities and products needed improvement in order to better achieve programme goals. Another evaluation found that, due to strong government partnerships, the activities of a field-based gender unit had a positive outcome on influencing national policy development.

36. A review of the four cross-cutting, programme-wide evaluation reports also revealed similarities in reported findings. Specific challenges noted in programme design included weak logistical arrangements, inadequate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, unrealistic programme and project assumptions, and overambitious designs. The need for better financial planning was identified in more than one programme, as was the need to identify the right partners and consult and collaborate with all relevant stakeholders when designing and delivering a programme. For field-based programmes, the reports note that commitment and receptivity at the country level are needed for effective service delivery. The evaluations also assessed programme sustainability as being dependent upon appropriate selection of counterpart institutions, long-term commitment of resources, strong management, and adequate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

B. Evaluation use

Evaluations from the past biennium have been used primarily to strengthen specific components of programme performance

37. Evaluation recommendations from the past biennium largely addressed issues of programme design and delivery. Of the 75 reports reviewed by OIOS, most contained recommendations to strengthen programme implementation (86 per cent) and design (74 per cent). In addition, over half of the evaluation recommendations (52 per cent) were targeted to specific programme outputs, while one third recommended policy improvements. Only 20 per cent of recommendations were made to enhance programme impact.

38. Programme managers report a variety of uses for the evaluations of their programmes. Nearly half of the study focal points (48 per cent) report that evaluations have been used successfully to improve programme performance. Forty-four per cent state that evaluations have been used for learning, while 30 per cent say evaluations have been used for purposes of compliance, oversight, and/or accountability. Just one fourth of programme focal points say evaluations are used to feed into and improve future policy decisions.

39. Programme focal points also attest to a range of positive outcomes from evaluations: most commonly, focal points reported that evaluations have resulted in better informed and more relevant decision-making on future programme design and planning (37 per cent); better informed and more relevant decision-making on current programme implementation (30 per cent); and improved organizational effectiveness and efficiency (30 per cent). None reported that evaluations had no positive impact.

40. More specific examples of positive results attributed to evaluations by programme focal points include:

(a) Identification of gaps in one programme's partnership policy that were subsequently addressed and resulted in enhanced coordination;

(b) Increased and more focused direction from Member States regarding a programme's structure and programmatic approaches;

(c) Management's decision in one programme to develop an organizational strategy in response to evaluation recommendations;

(d) Enhanced project design, increased interdivisional collaboration and improved collaboration with external partners in another programme;

(e) A more streamlined focus on key functions and activities in yet another programme.

41. The four cross-cutting, programme-wide evaluations also reveal the positive use of evaluations. While one report cautions that "questions still remain about whether or not evaluation has made a difference to date and whether it has contributed to informed decision-making", in general, reports note the positive role that evaluation can play. This can be partly measured by the extent to which evaluation recommendations are being implemented in the respective programmes. According to one programme-level evaluation report, 55 per cent of recommendations issued over the period from 2000 to 2005 had been implemented by 2006, while 35 per cent were in progress. Another report indicates that 48 per cent of programme recommendations dating back to 2002 had been implemented by 2006, with 34 per cent in progress. OIOS notes, however, that these implementation rates are below the General Assembly approved target implementation rate of 75 per cent established by OIOS for its evaluation recommendations in 2006-2007.

42. In addition to implementation rates, the four cross-cutting reports highlight other programme enhancements, including the strengthening of Government involvement in project implementation, better dissemination of successful outcomes, management commitment to establish a knowledge management system, and enhanced inter-agency collaboration.

C. Overview of Secretariat evaluation practice and capacity

43. The main finding of the OIOS assessment of evaluation capacities and needs in the United Nations Secretariat (IED-2006-006) is that overall evaluation capacity at the central, programme and subprogramme levels of the Secretariat is inadequate. This is due to insufficient financial and staffing resources, uneven competencies, and lack of senior leadership support. Budgets for evaluation continue to be low, despite showing some improvement. The Department of Management states that resources identified for monitoring and evaluation activities were estimated to be US$ 43.9 million in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009, which represents an increase of 80.1 per cent, as compared to the resources identified for 2006-2007. However, even with these increases, resources dedicated to evaluation are still below the suggested general evaluation capacity benchmark of between 1 to 3 per cent of total programme costs being earmarked for evaluation activities (INS-07-002, para. 30). A comparison of programme evaluation plans for 2006-2007 and evaluations conducted in the biennium reveals that most have not been fully implemented.

44. While overall evaluation capacity continues to be inadequate, there have been some gradual improvements over the past biennium. By three measures — dedicated evaluation function, evaluation policies, and evaluation coverage — capacity has been growing. OIOS acknowledges that quality, which it did not assess in this study, is also important. A total of 21 programmes reported having posts devoted either full-time (14) or part-time (7) to evaluation.[15] In March 2007, of 27 programmes surveyed, 16 had dedicated evaluation units (INS-07-002, para. 49). OIOS identified five large programmes at that time, namely, the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, the Department of Management, the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, as not having a dedicated evaluation capacity despite meeting benchmarks for needing such capacity.[16] Since then, four of the five programmes have established, or are taking steps to establish, a dedicated capacity; the Department of Economic and Social Affairs remains the only large department that has not yet taken any such steps. OIOS notes, however, that dedicated resources being planned for these new capacities are still inadequate.[17] Furthermore, while as at July 2007, 9 programmes had final or draft evaluation policies, as at June 2008,

[15] The programmes without posts dedicated for evaluation, as reported in the OIOS programme focal point survey in March 2008 are: the United Nations Office at Nairobi, the United Nations Office at Geneva, the Department of Political Affairs, the United Nations Office at Vienna, the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and OIOS.

[16] Through proposals in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009, the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management sought to establish a unit with responsibility for evaluation, among other tasks. However, the proposals were not adopted. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs has included dedicated resources for evaluation in its proposal for strengthening the development pillar, which was expected to be discussed by the General Assembly later in 2008 (see A/62/708).

[17] In the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, the staff resources being planned for evaluation will amount to less than one staff member's time. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations will have only two full-time evaluators.

18 programmes had such policies.[18] In addition, less than half of all subprogrammes (48 per cent) had been subject to some form of evaluation in the biennium 2004-2005, and, while not directly comparable, 64.5 per cent of programmes had been subject to evaluation in the biennium 2006-2007. Finally, evaluation plans for 2008-2009, compared to plans from the last biennium, typically show an enhanced evaluation agenda.[19]

45. OIOS notes that the overall improvements discussed above are not consistent throughout the Secretariat; evaluation activity is uneven within the Organization. As referenced in paragraph 5 and in annex II, of 31 programmes, 11 (35 per cent) had no evaluations (as per the OIOS operational definition) for the biennium 2006-2007.[20] Five programmes account for a majority of all evaluation reports (65 per cent) submitted to OIOS for the biennium.[21]

46. With regard to evaluation practice, more than half of the programme focal points (59 per cent) reported having formal procedures in place for sharing and/or disseminating evaluation results and for developing action plans for implementing recommendations (52 per cent).[22] Another 44 per cent have formal tracking and/or monitoring of recommendation implementation. Programmes are also undertaking other evaluative activities that do not in themselves constitute evaluations. Most commonly, these include performance monitoring activities (93 per cent), staff or stakeholder surveys (67 per cent), review and assessment meetings (67 per cent), and management reviews (59 per cent).

D. Evaluation workplan of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

Change in the work planning procedures of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

47. In 2006, the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services requested all divisions to enhance work planning procedures. This included basing work priorities on risk assessments in order to ensure strategic focus of OIOS work; developing a coherent, systematic and methodical approach to risk assessment; and ensuring transparency in choosing what to review.[23] Risk assessment in OIOS is

---

[18] The nine programmes without an evaluation policy as at June 2008 are: the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, UN-Habitat, the United Nations Office at Nairobi, UNRWA, the United Nations Office at Geneva, the Office for Outer Space Affairs, the United Nations Office at Vienna, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa and the Department of Management.

[19] Due to variance in how the evaluation plans were filled out and submitted, OIOS was unable to conduct a direct comparison between the 2006-2007 and 2008-2009 plans.

[20] The 11 programmes are: the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, the Department of Management, the Department of Safety and Security, the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, the Office of Legal Affairs, the Office for Outer Space Affairs, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, the United Nations Office at Geneva, the United Nations Office at Nairobi and the United Nations Office at Vienna.

[21] These five programmes are: UNEP, UNODC, ITC, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and UNHCR.

[22] OIOS did not collect these data in its evaluation needs assessment report, and therefore it is not possible to compare between prior and current practice.

[23] OIOS defines "risk" as the possibility of an event occurring that will have a negative impact on the achievement of objectives.

defined as the process of identifying and analysing relevant risks to the achievement of the entity's objectives and determining the appropriate response.

Approach of the Inspection and Evaluation Division

48. Beginning in 2007, the Inspection and Evaluation Division has utilized a systematic, strategic risk-based planning approach to establish evaluation priorities. To be responsive to General Assembly mandated outputs, however, not all of its work will be risk-based.

49. The Division's strategic risk-based planning approach aims to ensure that OIOS evaluation and inspection activities are relevant to United Nations governance, management and stakeholders by addressing oversight and strategic priorities in a regular and timely way, focusing its limited resources on areas requiring most urgent attention. In selecting potential topics, the Division used a planning framework that considers risk factors, strategic issues, and systematic and cyclical coverage.

50. The Inspection and Evaluation Division strategic risk plan thus considers:

(a) Risk;

(b) Strategic issues;

(c) Systematic and cyclical coverage.

51. In its report on the budget for OIOS under the support account for peacekeeping operations for one period from 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009, the Independent Audit Advisory Committee reviewed the plan and considered that the strategic risk-based planning approach used by the Inspection and Evaluation Division provided a reasonable basis for establishing its initial workplan for 2008 (A/62/814, para. 38). The Committee was pleased to note that the workplan provided complete information in support of the activities to be undertaken by the Division in 2008.

52. **Risk assessment.** The Division identified 12 proxy risk indicators for which uniform and comparable data are available for the Secretariat programmes within the OIOS oversight mandate. Programmes are rated based on a ranking of aggregate weighted scores for the following 12 indicators:

Risk indicators

1. Total resources
2. Number of posts
3. Discretionary vulnerability
4. Complexity of coordination needs
5. Output implementation rate
6. Availability of programme performance information
7. Evaluation coverage
8. Resources spent on evaluation
9. Time of outstanding OIOS recommendations

10. Timeliness of reporting (slotting dates)

11. e-PAS compliance rate

12. Gender equality

53. **Strategic issues.** In addition to the risk assessment above, in order to ensure that its evaluations and inspections are relevant and timely to United Nations stakeholders, the Division conducted a review of General Assembly agenda items and international conference information from the present to 2009 to identify cross-cutting thematic topics of strategic and Secretariat-wide interest. OIOS notes that this does not constitute a fully comprehensive strategic approach; an enhanced approach would involve more current analyses of critical and urgent external challenges that may not have been identified at the time of setting General Assembly agenda items. The Division will explore further development of the strategic component of its work planning framework for the next biennium.

54. **Systemic and cyclical coverage.** Given the significant size of some Secretariat programmes, the evaluation of which may require more than a year to complete, and the fact that the General Assembly mandates triennial reviews of the implementation of recommendations arising from those evaluations, a cycle of eight years would ensure that each programme is subject to at least two independent evaluative oversight activities: an in-depth evaluation, followed by a triennial review. More frequent assessments may be arranged if specific risks are identified in the subject programme. The General Assembly and its intergovernmental bodies will have available some form of independent assessment of each programme at least once between every second and third biennium budget process.

Evaluation topics for the biennium 2008-2009

55. OIOS topics for inspection and evaluation in 2008 and 2009 were selected based on existing mandates and its risk-assessment exercise.[24] In addition, the Office undertook two ad hoc client requests to conduct independent evaluations.

56. At its sixty-first session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 61/235, in which it endorsed the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination on the work of its forty-sixth session (A/61/16 and Corr.1, paras. 369 and 370) and requested an in-depth evaluation by OIOS of United Nations support for the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and Africa, for presentation to the Committee for Programme and Coordination in 2009. In the same resolution, the Assembly endorsed paragraph 370 of the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (A/61/16 and Corr.1) and mandated a thematic evaluation of United Nations coordinating bodies, to be undertaken in accordance with its resolutions 48/218 B, 54/244 and 59/272, for presentation to the Committee for Programme and Coordination in 2009.

57. In addition to the mandated evaluations discussed above, the Inspection and Evaluation Division undertook its risk assessment of the programmes in its purview. The programmes ranked for priority are: the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, OHCHR, UNEP, UNHCR, the Office for the Coordination of

[24] The risk assessment was conducted in 2007. The Inspection and Evaluation Division conducted another risk assessment in 2008 for preparation of its 2010-2011 workplan, which was not final at the time the present report was issued.

Humanitarian Affairs, UNODC, UNRWA, the Department of Management, ECA and UN-Habitat. However, in order to achieve systemic and regular programme evaluation coverage, those programmes recently subject to evaluation and/or inspection by the Division were deselected. These were — UNHCR, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, and UNEP, all of which were subject to inspections by the Division in 2007; UNODC, which was subject to a review of management and administrative practices in 2006; the Department of Management, the Office of Human Resources Management, which is currently undergoing an in-depth evaluation; and UN-Habitat, which was subject to in-depth evaluation in 2005. This left four programmes for evaluation, namely, OHCHR, UNRWA, ECA and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

58. Furthermore, for 2008 and 2009 thematic evaluations of Secretariat-wide strategic issues, the Division focused on the topic of "peacekeeping operations", for which it has a separate support account budget, and on topics related to the environmental work of the Secretariat. For the former, one mission-level topic (the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI)) and one cross-cutting peacekeeping topic (disarmament, demobilization and reintegration) were identified as being of high risk and were therefore selected for evaluation in this cycle.

59. OIOS plans to complete the following evaluations in 2008 and 2009:

1. Programme evaluation of the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States
2. Programme evaluation of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa
3. Programme evaluation of UNRWA
4. Programme evaluation of OHCHR
5. Thematic evaluation of Secretariat environmental work
6. Thematic evaluation of United Nations coordinating bodies
7. Evaluation of the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund
8. Programme evaluation of UNOCI
9. Thematic evaluation of peacekeeping disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
10. Ad hoc evaluation of the Peacebuilding Fund
11. Ad hoc evaluation of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management/Integrated Global Management

60. OIOS plans to complete the following evaluations in 2010 and 2011:

1. Programme evaluations of the Department of Management
2. Programme evaluations of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs
3. Thematic evaluation on gender
4. Thematic evaluation on climate change
5. Programme evaluation of peacekeeping missions

6. Thematic evaluation of Department of Peacekeeping Operations cooperation with regional organizations

61. In addition to its evaluations, in both bienniums the Inspection and Evaluation Division will inspect and validate performance report data of programmes and assess their self-evaluation quality, as a means of monitoring, in order to inform the Secretary-General and Member States on the reliability of programmes' reported results and their capacity for learning and improving. The Division is also undertaking an inspection of the human resources and management practices of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in 2009, and will conduct mandated triennial reviews in 2009, 2010 and 2011.

62. The Committee for Programme and Coordination may wish to consider which of the reports from the 2008-2009 and 2010-2011 workplans of the Division it would like to review at its fifty-first session in 2011, as well as any additional reports.

E. Follow-up on recommended actions from prior report

63. The prior OIOS biennial study, presented in 2006 (A/61/83, paras. 28-32), identified three actions for strengthening evaluation practice and capacity. Action 1 was to conduct a Secretariat-wide evaluation needs assessment to identify specific evaluation needs, functions, resources and capacity. OIOS conducted this exercise in 2006 and 2007, resulting in the Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the assessment of evaluation capacities and needs in the United Nations Secretariat (IED-2006-006). The report contained eight recommendations, as follows:

1. All programmes should have dedicated evaluation capacity.
2. The Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts should establish a standard procedure to plan, budget and report on the use of evaluation reports.
3. The Secretary-General should consider proposing to the General Assembly the establishment of a Secretariat-wide evaluation fund/account and request all programme managers to include clearly specified resources for evaluation in all proposals for extrabudgetary financed activities.
4. The Secretary-General should endorse and promulgate the norms and standards for evaluation of the United Nations Evaluation Group.
5. All programmes should establish evaluation policies.
6. All programmes should ensure that evaluation plans at the programme and subprogramme level are developed.
7. All programmes should ensure that evaluation reports are made available on the Internet and/or Intranet.
8. The Office of Human Resources Management should develop and incorporate evaluation modules as part of its standard training programme.

64. OIOS has already started to track the implementation of these recommendations, 56 per cent of which had been implemented as at November 2008. Eleven programmes have implemented all recommendations addressed to them.[25]

65. Action 2 was to translate the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation into clear and practical guidelines. In December 2007, OIOS issued guidance to programme heads on developing an evaluation policy. The above-mentioned recommendation that the Secretary-General endorse and promulgate the norms and standards for evaluation in the United Nations of the United Nations Evaluation Group was a further attempt to issue clear and practical guidelines to Secretariat programmes for the conduct of evaluations. OIOS has not done more to clarify existing rules and regulations because of a pending General Assembly decision regarding placement of the self-evaluation support function in the Secretariat. The Secretary-General has proposed that this function be transferred from OIOS to the Department of Management, and OIOS concurs.[26] It would be most appropriate to await a decision on which department will support self-evaluation, and for that department to clarify the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation.

66. Action 3 pertained to the OIOS programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 reflecting adequate requirements for rigorous and regular central evaluation. Based on its assessment of adequate evaluation coverage, as presented in the Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on proposals for strengthening the Office of Internal Oversight Services (A/60/901), OIOS proposed 14 new posts for the Investigation and Evaluation Division, for a total staffing level of 29; this was deemed adequate to enable the conduct of between eight to ten evaluation reports per year. In December 2007, through General Assembly resolution 62/236, nine new general temporary assistance posts were approved for the Division, resulting in a total of 25 staff (including one peacekeeping post) for the Division. This is four fewer posts than OIOS requested, and furthermore, it should be noted that with the exception of a D-2 post, all the other posts were at the P-2 or P-3 level. With the amount and level of resources provided, OIOS will not be able to produce fully the approved inspection and evaluation outputs for 2008-2009, and will need to make adjustments accordingly.

---

[25] The 11 programmes are: Disarmament; Least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States; Internal oversight; Trade and development; Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean; Economic development in Europe; International protection, durable solutions and assistance to refugees; United Nations support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development; International drug control, crime and terrorism prevention and criminal justice; Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific; and Economic and social development in Western Asia.

[26] The proposal to transfer this function is presented in the report of the Secretary-General on Accountability framework, enterprise risk management and internal control framework, and results-based management framework (A/62/701).

IV. Conclusions

67. While evaluation is playing a positive role in improving performance, overall evaluation capacity of the Secretariat continues to be inadequate. While still not at full capacity, and still not adequately utilized as a management tool and mechanism for strengthening programme performance, there are encouraging signs from the past biennium that evaluation is being given greater attention and making a bigger difference in the work of the Organization. More departments are dedicating resources for evaluation, even though they still do not meet established evaluation capacity benchmarks. There are also improvements with regard to the development of evaluation policies and coverage, as well as an indication that evaluations have played a positive role in enhancing programme design and delivery.

68. The independent evaluation function of OIOS has also been strengthened, although not to the extent that is needed in order to ensure regular coverage of all programmes in the Secretariat in a reasonable cycle — one that provides independent, objective information on programme results and the attainment of General Assembly mandates on a more ongoing basis. This is the information that is needed to support reflection and decision-making by the Organization's governance and management bodies.

69. OIOS notes that evaluation can be a valuable source of information on what works well and what does not in the Organization. This was demonstrated by the synthesis of evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations from the past biennium, which identified key issues with regard to the Organization's performance. As has been noted in other OIOS evaluations on knowledge management and lessons learned, this is crucial information that needs to be captured, shared and utilized in order to facilitate improvements to the Organization.

70. OIOS will provide an updated assessment of the findings, practice and use of evaluation in its next (eleventh) biennial study, and welcomes any suggestions from both Member States and senior leadership on how to improve this report to better meet the needs of decision makers.

Annex I

Programmes determined to be within the purview of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

At the time the present biennial study was designed, 31 programmes were determined to be within the purview of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS). Per standard reporting procedures, the United Nations Office at Geneva, the United Nations Office at Nairobi, and the United Nations Office at Vienna reported on evaluations conducted on or by their Office of their respective Directors-General and Administration Services, as well as any Office-wide evaluations. The Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, the Department of Public Information, and Department of Safety and Security reported on conference services, information services and safety and security services, respectively, implemented by duty stations. The International Court of Justice was not included in the study because it had previously stated that it did not fall within the OIOS mandate.

1. Department of Economic and Social Affairs
2. Department for General Assembly and Conference Management
3. Department of Management
4. Department of Political Affairs
5. Department of Public Information
6. Department of Peacekeeping Operations (includes the Department of Field Support)
7. Department of Safety and Security
8. Economic Commission for Africa
9. Economic Commission for Europe
10. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
11. Executive Office of the Secretary-General
12. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
13. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
14. International Trade Centre
15. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
16. Office for Disarmament Affairs
17. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
18. Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States
19. Office of Internal Oversight Services
20. Office of Legal Affairs
21. Office for Outer Space Affairs

22. Office of the Special Adviser on Africa
23. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
24. United Nations Environment Programme
25. United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)
26. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
27. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
28. United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
29. United Nations Office at Geneva
30. United Nations Office at Nairobi
31. United Nations Office at Vienna

Annex II

Methodology utilized in conducting the present study

1. In collecting 2006-2007 evaluation reports, OIOS first independently identified evaluations from available sources, including programme Internet websites. OIOS then requested programme focal points to verify and/or submit additional reports for the biennium. Of the 31 programmes in this study: 18 verified and/or submitted evaluation reports; 11 had no evaluations (as per the OIOS operational definition); one programme (the Department of Peacekeeping Operations) did not submit all its evaluation reports by the analysis date; and another programme (the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management) did not submit any reports by the cut-off submission date.

2. Evaluations submitted to OIOS were started during the biennium 2006-2007 and completed by 31 December 2007. In total, OIOS obtained 201 reports, all of which were preliminarily reviewed to verify that they met the OIOS operational definition of "evaluation". An OIOS panel then verified whether those reports that were deemed questionable in the preliminary review met the OIOS definition. Of the 40 reports reviewed, 33 were determined not to be evaluation reports and therefore were not included in the biennial study. The final universe of evaluation reports for the meta-evaluation thus consisted of 168 reports, including three Secretariat-wide evaluations conducted by OIOS.

3. For the quantitative review of evaluation report attributes, OIOS selected a non-random sample of 75 reports from the universe of 168 evaluation reports obtained. For departments with five or fewer evaluations for the biennium, all reports were sampled. For departments with more than five evaluations, a purposive sample of five reports was drawn for each. In selecting this sample, the following criteria were applied: a balanced mix of reports completed in 2006 and 2007; a balanced mix of reports that were midterm versus final evaluations; a balanced mix of evaluations at varying levels; and a balanced mix of topics and geographic areas/countries covered.

4. For this quantitative analysis, a structured review was conducted using a standard instrument with common criteria for assessing report attributes. These included criteria on overall evaluation scope, focus, evaluation criteria, categories of findings and conclusions, and categories of recommendations.

5. For the first qualitative analysis of priority areas, OIOS reviewed the main conclusions of a non-random sample of 35 reports (from the 75 mentioned above) produced on those programmes with activities related to the eight priority areas of the Organization and categorized these into the following areas: maintenance of peace and security; disarmament; promotion of sustained economic growth and sustainable development; development for Africa; promotion of human rights; effective coordination of humanitarian assistance efforts; promotion of justice and international law; and drug control, crime prevention and combating international terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

6. For the second qualitative analysis of programme policy, design and delivery, OIOS selected a stratified random sample of 15 reports (from the 75 mentioned above). The 75 reports were placed into three strata, depending on their focus: programme design, programme delivery/implementation and policy directives. Five

reports were randomly sampled from each stratum, for a total of 15 reports. For the analysis, a qualitative data analysis software package was used to identify text in the sample reports addressing issues of programme policy, design and delivery. A content analysis was conducted of this text to determine key themes, issues and conclusions.

For the review of the four cross-cutting, programme-wide evaluations, the reports were systematically analysed to determine key findings and conclusions emanating from the programme-wide assessment.

(*Signed*) Inga-Britt **Ahlenius**
Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services

25 February 2009